

Effect of Guidance and Counselling on Pupils in Public Primary Schools in Makadara Division of Nairobi Province

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed at assessing the effect of guidance and counseling on pupils in primary schools in Makadara Division, Nairobi Province. The specific objectives of the study are: (i) to assess the extent to which primary schools in Makadara Division of Nairobi province have adopted counseling and guidance; and to evaluate the effect of guidance and counseling services on pupils of primary schools in Makadara division of Nairobi Province. **Methodology:** A survey of primary schools in Makadara Division, Nairobi Province was adopted for the study. The study took the form of descriptive survey, which is a scientific study done to describe a phenomena or an object. The study utilized a combination of both quantitative and qualitative techniques in the collection of secondary and primary data. A questionnaire, which was the main data collection instrument, enabled the researcher to gather in-depth information on phenomena under investigation. The researcher also used interview schedules, which had open questions, aimed at meeting the objectives of the study. In addition, observation method was used in confirming the questionnaire responses. **Data Analysis:** In order to analyze and present information related to the profile of the respondents, graphs, charts, percentages and frequencies were used. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to aid in analysis. **Findings:** The findings of the study indicate that Benefits of an Effective School Counseling and Guidance Program include the following:- (i) **Benefits to pupils:** - guarantees services to all pupils; focuses on pupils' needs; develops proactive skills for all pupils; provides age-appropriate levels of interaction and instruction; and helps pupils become more resourceful in decision making; (ii) **Benefits to parents:-** encourages involvement of parents in pupils'; learning environment; provides parents timely, appropriate support and resources when needed; increases opportunities for parent, student and counselor interaction; and brings about better understanding of the guidance and counseling program; and (iii) **Teachers:-** promotes a team effort to address school counseling competencies; increases teacher accessibility to counselor as a multiple resource; integrates curricula and associated competencies; and integrates interdisciplinary approach with all curricular areas.

Keywords: Guidance; Counseling; Public Schools

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

It is an often overlooked fact that elementary and secondary school counselors can significantly impact student achievement, retention and behavior in schools. Research conducted by Borders and Drury (1992) found that school counseling interventions have a substantial impact on student's educational and personal development. Studies of a five-year dropout prevention by Kaufman, Klein and Frase (1999) showed that counseling services were one of the key elements of promising dropout prevention initiatives. Many other studies point to similar correlations between effective school counseling programs and student success.

These studies also highlight a common and widespread reality that school counselor numbers are severely limited and that those who do work in schools are overloaded. For instance, an Indiana study of school counselor's time use found that almost a third of a counselor's time is spent doing clerical work that takes them away from face-to-face contact with students.

With tight budgets, high caseloads and significant time, material and human resource limitations, school counselors must begin using research-based, replicable school counseling interventions that are proven to be effective. And schools must find creative ways to ensure that counselors are spending more of their time with students instead of completing non-counseling, clerical tasks. Both pieces must be in place in order to ensure that school counselor effectiveness in improving student achievement and retention is maximized. This project report rests on the following fundamental beliefs: (i) School counselors make a significant impact on student achievement, retention and readiness for postsecondary education and training; (ii) Because of high student-to-counselor ratios, slim budgets and overwhelming schedules, school counselors must concentrate on using research-based practices and evidence-based interventions proven to positively affect student achievement, retention and readiness; and (iii) Providing opportunities for school counselors to spend more face-to-face time with struggling students will have a positive impact on student success, lines of communication with parents and more positive relationships with students. Finding ways to allow school counselors to use more of their time to implement effective school counseling interventions is the primary purpose of this project.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The school system in Kenya has been faced with several issues that call for concern. Issues like drug abuse, addictions, irresponsible sexual behaviors and other forms of violence are on the increase. Indiscipline levels in schools have generally gone up. The teacher on his or her attempt to curb the situation seems to be infringing on human rights. The ministry of education has come up with a policy on guidance and counseling methods of containing pupils' behaviors in schools. The parents and public at large are crying for their languishing youth. The teacher/ councilor seem to be the best person to rescue them. The government has banned the use of canes and other forms of corporal punishments in schools. Recently, the ministry of Education has put all disciplinary responsibilities on the shoulders of the teacher counselors. The question that is left in search of an answer is whether guidance and counseling will work it all alone and whether it is applicable in an environment where indiscipline cases are on the rise.

Research on guidance and counseling programs has generally yielded positive outcome results, including enhanced student learning (Kuhl, 1994), and has been recommended as the preferred model of guidance service delivery to schools (Gysbers and Blair, 1999; Sink and MacDonald, 1998). Lapan *et al.* (1997) reported that schools with more fully implemented guidance programs had students who were more likely to report that they had earned higher grades, were better prepared for their future, had more career and college information available to them, and their school had a more positive climate. Despite the generally positive perception of comprehensive programs, MacDonald and Sink (1999) found that comprehensive programs lacked clarity as to how the program components were integrated with one another. In recommending a model that would yield positive changes within schools, Gysbers *et al.* (1999) and Rowley (2000) stressed the importance of collaboration among school counselors, administrators, and counselor educators.

Literature on guidance and counseling programs in Kenyan schools remains scarce. Hiebert (1994) provided guidelines for an outcome-based approach to comprehensive guidance and counseling programs in a publication for the Alberta Department of Education. Based upon this report, the Alberta Department of Education (1995) produced guidelines for Alberta schools to implement a comprehensive guidance and counseling program. The primary purpose of this study is to assess the impact of counseling and guidance programmes and establish the extent to which implementation of guidance and counseling programs has been done at the primary school level in Makadara Division of Nairobi Province. Specifically, the research aims to assess counselors' perceptions of what helps or hinders successful implementation. Based upon these perceptions, articulate more clearly and precisely why some counselors experience success, and wanted to explore more fully the level of satisfaction that counselors had with the implementation and delivery of the counseling and guidance at their schools. Lack of a better understanding of the impact of the guidance and counseling on the pupils in primary schools in Nairobi is indeed a knowledge gap that the researcher has attempted to bridge.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The purpose of the study was to establish the impact of guidance and counseling on pupils in primary schools in Makadara Division, Nairobi Province.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:

- i. To assess the extent to which primary schools in Makadara Division of Nairobi province have adopted counseling and guidance.
- ii. To evaluate the effect of guidance and counseling services on pupils of primary schools in Makadara division of Nairobi Province

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study focused on all the public primary schools in Makadara Division of Nairobi province, whose number stood at 25 as at 30th April, 2008 (See appendix I). The study sought to determine the impact of counseling and guidance services on pupils of primary schools in Makadara division of Nairobi province and was undertaken in a period of three months, commencing March, 2008.

1.5 Significance of Study

This study sought to raise ideas and issues in the hope that the various stakeholders and persons affected by issues related to discipline of pupils in schools will continue the discussion. The findings of this study, it is hoped, will be beneficial to the following:

Future researchers will gain the much needed information, skills and expertise that will form a basis for future research.

Teachers and School administrators will benefit by gaining an understanding of the importance of guidance and counseling of pupils in schools, aimed at enhancing discipline and hence affect the performance of

schools and their work in general.

Parents will benefit from the findings and get a better understanding, appreciate and support the role played by teachers in guiding and counseling their children to improve their grades and grow to become responsible adults.

The Government and the Ministry of Education and other policy makers will gain an understanding of the gaps existing in guidance and counseling related issues, which may be addressed through proper policy guidelines and frameworks and skills improvement measures such as enhanced training of teachers and administrators in guidance and counseling.

1.6 Conceptual framework

Figure 1.1 below presents the conceptual framework for the study.

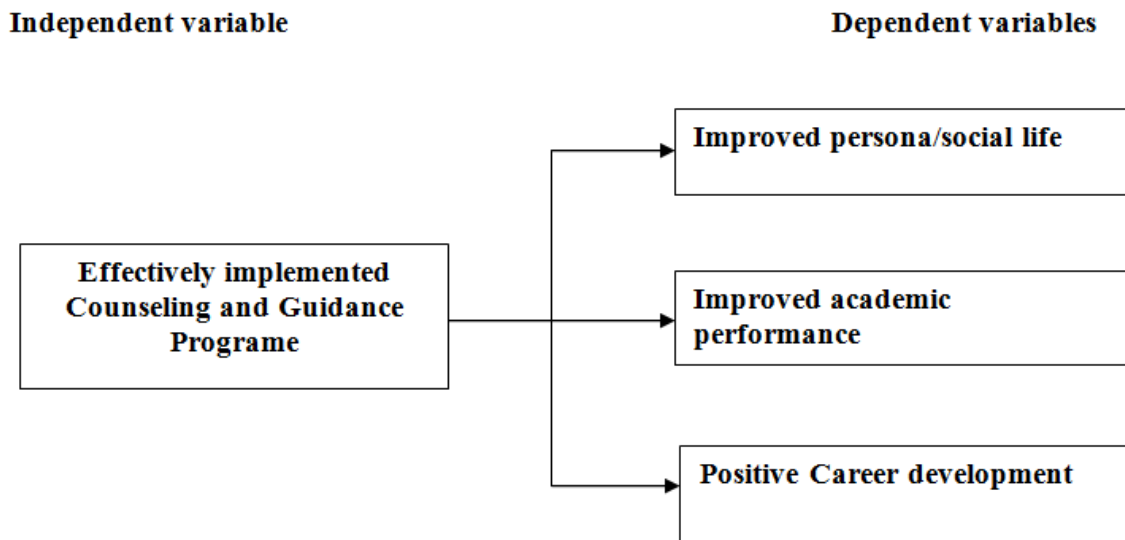


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a description of the relevant literature surrounding the research problem, which form the foundation of the empirical study. The researcher discusses counseling and guidance in general and then takes a look at its significance and contribution in schools management. The chapter is organized according to the specific objectives in order to ensure relevance to the research problem. The review was undertaken in order to eliminate duplication of what has been done and provide a clear understanding of existing knowledge base in the problem area. The literature review is based on authoritative, recent, and original sources such as journals, books, thesis and dissertations.

2.2 The Importance of Counseling and Guidance Programs

The most significant and urgent need, relative to having such effective guidance programs in every school in the nation, is to establish highly trained and experienced guidance leadership at the state and local level. Business and industry and foundations need to examine the leadership issue and respond to a call for the establishment and funding of a Guidance Leadership Academy. Such an academy will address the critical need for strengthening guidance leadership through short- and long-term methods.

The presence of experienced, professionally trained district and, especially, state-level guidance supervisors is perilously low. States allow long lapses between personnel changes in this position, or assign the guidance function to those who already have numerous other roles. Too many states have no one assigned to state guidance leadership. Any substantial growth and refinement of guidance programs in schools are seriously threatened by the lack of trained guidance professionals at the state level. Likewise, district level leadership focus needs to change from preoccupation with legal issues of student deportment and immersion in the management of crisis events, to fostering a complete and developmental guidance program in all their schools for all students.

2.3 The Changing Forms of Counseling and Guidance programs

This brief chronology illustrates that guidance has been and continues to be a major economic and social

program that assists all individuals in dealing effectively with their lifelong development, including career choice and job adjustment. Numerous improvements have occurred in the quality of guidance partly because of how school counselors have helped individuals respond to changes in the structure of American society, and partly because of the research and development work of the guidance profession. Several of these changes are cited as follows: (i) At one time, guidance focused mainly on helping young people make the transition from school to work. Guidance is now viewed as an all-encompassing program that assists individuals of all ages and circumstances be more effective learners, citizens, and workers; (ii) Previously, guidance was structured only as a support service, and staffed as a position; (ii) Now guidance is seen as a comprehensive program responding to individual and societal needs of all ages; and (iii) Guidance has moved from a way to assess the aptitude and interests of individuals and to assist them in occupational choice making to one that assists all individuals to develop competencies in self-understanding, interpersonal relations, decision making, goal setting, and planning. As a result, youth and adults are able to make informed life and career choices.

2.4 Impact of counseling and guidance programs in primary schools

School counselors provide counseling programs in three critical areas: academic, personal/social, and career. Their services and programs help students resolve emotional, social or behavioral problems and help them develop a clearer focus or sense of direction. Effective counseling programs are important to the school climate and a crucial element in improving student achievement. School counselors, like all educational professionals, are increasingly being required to demonstrate evidence of effective practice. This section of the project report provides a collection of sources that address the effectiveness of school counseling and other student support services, including their contribution to the personal and academic success of students. Based on its research, the Institute of Medicine has concluded that mental health and psychological services were essential for many students to achieve academically, and recommended that such services be considered mainstream, and not optional (Institute of Medicine, 1997).

According to the U.S. Department of Education, the current U.S. average student/counselor ratio is 488:1. According to the American School Health Association, the maximum recommended student/counselor ratio is 250:1. The ratio is more than 1,000:1 in some schools. School Counselors and Student Achievement. Several studies found that elementary guidance activities have a positive influence on elementary students' academic achievement (Sink and Stroh, 2003). School counseling interventions have reported success for helping students reduce test anxiety (Cheek *et al*, 2002). School counselors in collaborative efforts can implement both systemic and programmatic changes in schools and communities to prevent students from dropping out of school (. Standard, R.P., 2003). Studies on high school attrition indicate that preventive counseling, occurring before students are in crisis, reduces the risk of these students dropping out later. According to Hayes *et al* (2002), Counseling decreases classroom disturbances. Counseling services support teachers in the classroom and enable teachers to provide quality instruction designed to assist students in achieving high standards. Students in schools that provide counseling services indicated that their classes were less likely to be interrupted by other students, and that their peers behaved better in school (Mullis and Otwell, 1997).

A study of Missouri high schools shows that schools with more fully implemented model guidance programs had students who were more likely to report that (a) they had earned higher grades, (b) their education was better preparing them for the future, (c) their school made more career and college information available to them, and (d) their school had a more positive climate (greater feelings of belonging and safety at school, classes less likely to be interrupted, peers behaving better). After removing the variables of school enrollment size, socioeconomic status, and percentage of minority students in attendance, positive program effects were identifiable.

One study found that high school counselors influenced their students' future plans by encouraging them to have high expectations. A high proportion of 10th and 12th grade students who were surveyed perceived that their counselor expected them to attend college, regardless

of their racial background. High school students' own educational expectations for themselves increased over time (Mau, 1998).

In studies on the effects of a small group counseling approach for failing elementary school students, 83 percent of participating students showed improvement in grades (Boutwell and Myrick, 1992). A study done in Gwinnett County, Georgia shows that school counselors' impact students' academic performance and can increase the on-task, productive behavior of students and reduce disruptive behaviors. The Behavior Rating Checklist indicated statistically significant decreases in disruptive behaviors and significant increases in productive, on-task behaviors for both the third grade and the fifth grade students tested. Language arts progress was statistically significant for both grade levels as well (Mullis and Otwell, 1997).

School Counselors, due to their training, experience and accessibility are considered to be the best equipped school-based professionals to develop and implement both prevention and intervention programs for

youth at risk (Miano et al, 1997). Children who are experiencing family problems report being helped by school counselors (Rose and Rose, 1992). School counselors help connect the family as a whole to the educational process (Bemak and Cornely, 2002). School counselors have proven effective in preventing students from committing suicide. The most effective prevention programs start with younger students and portray suicide as a mental health problem, not a dramatic way of ending a life. It is essential that counselors involve the parents of troubled students in the counseling process (Jones, 2001).

School counseling programs have significant influence on discipline problems. Baker and Gerler reported that students who participated in a school counseling program had significantly less inappropriate behaviors and more positive attitudes toward school than those students who did not participate in the program. Another study reported that group counseling provided by school counselors significantly decreased participants' aggressive and hostile behaviors (Baker and Gerler, 2001). Health and mental health care services can play an important role in violence

prevention at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary), including preventing problem behaviors from developing; identifying and serving specific, at-risk populations; and reducing the deleterious effects of violence on victims and witnesses (Schaefer-Schiunio and Ginsberg, 2003).

Research indicates that school counselors are effective in teaching social skills (Verduyn *et al.*, 1990). Students who have access to counseling programs reported being more positive and having greater feelings of belonging and safety in their schools (Lapan *et al.*, 1997). School Counselors and Career Development School counselors are very effective in assisting children in the area of career development (Lapan *et al.*, 2003). Counselors are effective in assisting high school students with college choices (Student Poll, 2000).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims at defining the research design and methodology used in the study. It contains a description of the study design, target population, sample design and size, data collection instruments and procedure.

3.2 Research Design

To undertake the study, a descriptive research design was used. This is a scientific study done to describe a phenomena or an object. In this case the study phenomenon is organization performance management. This kind of study involved a rigorous research planning and execution and often involves answering research questions. It involved an extensive well-focused literature review and identification of the existing knowledge gap. The method was preferred as it permits gathering of data from the respondents in natural settings. In this case, it was possible for the researcher to administer the data collection tools to the respondents in their workstations, which was relatively easy, with high likelihood of increasing the response rate.

3.3 Description of the Population

The population of study was the public primary schools in Makadara Division of Nairobi province, whose number stood at 25 as at 30th April, 2011 (See appendix I). Owing to the small number of schools and the fact that all the schools are located close to each other, a census was undertaken. The respondents to the study were either the teacher in charge of counseling and guidance in the respective schools or the head teacher in the absence of the former.

3.4 Instrument for data collection

Semi-structured questionnaires with both closed and open-ended questions were administered. The questionnaire consisted of two sections, Section I and section II. Section I consisted of items pertaining to profile of the respondents while section II consisted of items pertaining to the area of study. The questionnaire, which was the main data collection instrument, enabled the researcher to gather in-depth information on phenomena under investigation. The researcher also used interview schedules, which had open questions, aimed at meeting the objectives of the study. In addition, observation method was used in confirming the questionnaire responses that are not clear.

3.5 Data collection procedures

Both secondary and primary data were collected. A desk study was undertaken, in which a review of the relevant literature was carried out. The sources of information included various websites, books, manuals and Journals. Primary data was collected from the respondents with the aid of the following sets of tools: - Questionnaires, Interview schedules, and Observations. The sets of questionnaires and interview guides were pre-tested on selected respondents to necessitate adjustments in order to make them more suitable and minimize bias in responses.

The procedure used in collection of primary data was through distribution of the questionnaires that is,

dropping and picking questionnaires from respondents at their most convenient time that was agreeable to both parties.

Personal interviews were conducted with 5 of the respondents selected at random, aided by an interview schedule. In this case the researcher was able to obtain additional information to corroborate findings from the questionnaire. The researcher further conducted observations to establish the conduct of pupils in various schools to observe aspects of discipline as indicated in existing records.

3.6 Data analysis

The responses to the various data collection tools were coded before analysis and interpretations were undertaken. Analysis was done using such statistical measures as averages, percentages and standard deviations. The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was presented in the form of frequency tables, descriptive statistics and variances. Qualitative information was presented through pie charts, bar charts and graphs.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the data analysis, presentation and interpretation. The data used was obtained from the questionnaires distributed to either Head Teachers or their representatives in the 25 public primary schools in Makadara Division. The main aim of the study was to identify and address shortcomings and knowledge gaps in the existing research base on the impact of counseling and guidance on primary school pupils. The main types of statistics used to achieve this objective were mainly descriptive statistics such as measures of central tendencies, frequency distributions, percentages and charts. Out of the 25 questionnaires that were sent out, 21 were returned completed (84% return rate). The high response rate could be attributed to the researcher's good relationship with the respondents, who made a follow up of every questionnaire sent out. The information is presented and discussed as per the objectives and research questions of the study.

4.2 Profile of respondents

Number of pupils in the school: The population size of pupils differed from school to school, with the highest being 1,210 and the lowest being 756. The average pupil population was 845. It can be concluded that a large population of pupils in Makadara Division were exposed to counseling and guidance.

Position of respondents: The respondents were meant to be the Heads of Teachers, and in their absence, the Deputy Head teachers or teachers in charge of counseling and guidance. Out of the 21 schools that participated in the study, 9 of the respondents were Head teachers, 7 were Deputy Head Teachers while 5 were teachers in charge of counseling and guidance. Since at least all the respondents were concerned with counseling and guidance, the responses were expected to be objective. Table 4.1 below presents a summary of the findings.

Table 4.1: Position of respondents

Respondent	Frequency	Percentage
Head Teacher	9	43
Deputy Head Teacher	7	33
Any other teacher	5	24
Total	21	100

4.2.2 Gender distribution of respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender. The Government of Kenya is currently putting emphasis on gender equality in employment in all sectors of the economy. The researcher sought to establish the extent to which gender balance was addressed by the Education sector, and especially in primary schools. The findings indicate that out of the 21 respondents, 74% were female while only 26% were male. The gender balance in the primary school leadership is skewed towards female (female dominated). Chart 4.1 below presents a summary of the findings.

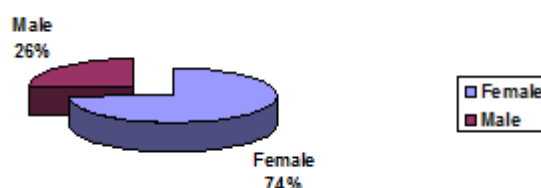


Figure: Gender distribution of the respondents

Age bracket of respondents: The older teachers are supposed to be experienced in handling different behavior

exhibited by pupils and would as such appreciate counseling and guidance as an ideal intervention. The findings show that none of the teachers was either below 27 years of age or above 55 (the mandatory retirement age). The findings are summarized and presented in chart 4.2 below.

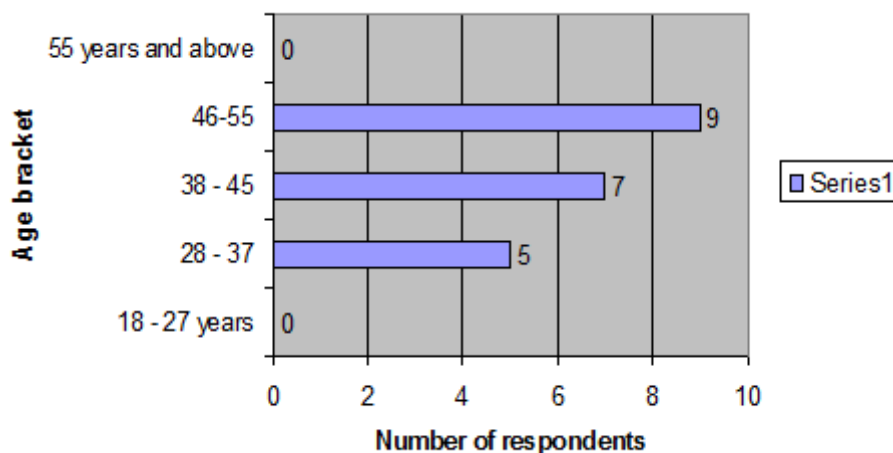


Figure: Age bracket of the respondents

Training in counseling and guidance: The respondents were asked whether they had been trained in counseling and guidance. Whereas 86% of the respondents had been trained, only 14% had not been trained. The 14% indicated that they would soon enroll for the relevant courses in counseling and guidance. The teachers were thus competent enough to address issues pertaining to counseling and guidance. Chart 4.3 below presents a summary of the findings.

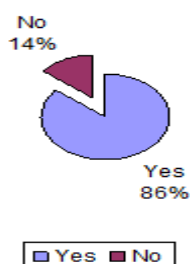


Figure: Training in Counseling and guidance

4.2.6 Period of time respondent worked as a counseling and guiding teacher

The findings indicate that only 3 respondents had worked and counseling and guidance teachers for less than 2 years. The respondents who had worked as counseling and guidance teachers for 4 years and above were 14. The period worked by the respondents in their current position was long enough for the employees to have experienced the challenges faced in counseling and guidance; hence they would be able to provide objective responses. Table 4.2 below presents a summary of the findings.

Table 4.2: Period respondents worked as counseling and guidance teachers

Period worked	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 2 years	3	14
2 to 4 years	4	19
4 to 6 years	6	28
6 years and above	8	38
Total	21	100

Period respondent taught in current school: The findings indicate that majority of the respondents (13) had taught in their current schools for 4 years and above and were thus familiar with pertinent issues facing counseling and guidance in their respective schools.. The responses would thus be objective. The responses are summarized and presented in chart 4.32 below.

Table 4.3: Period respondent had taught in current school

Period taught in current school	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 2 years	3	14
2 to 4 years	5	24
4 to 6 years	7	34
6 years and above	6	28
Total	21	

Source: Primary data

4.3 The extent to which primary schools in Makadara Division have adopted counseling and guidance

In order to meet the first objective of the study, “To establish the extent to which primary schools in Makadara Division of Nairobi province have adopted counseling and guidance”, the both the respondents (teachers) and the key informants (pupils) were asked a series of questions. Firstly, the teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which their respective schools offered counseling and guidance services to pupils by rating along a five point scale. The responses are summarized and presented in table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: The extent to which primary schools in Makadara Division have adopted counseling and guidance

Scale	Extent of adoption	Frequency	Percentage
5	To a very large extent.	3	14
4	To a large extent.	11	52
3	To some Extent.	6	29
2	To a small extent.	1	5
1	To no extent.	0	0
Total		21	100

Personal interviews with selected groups of pupils confirmed that indeed the primary schools had at least adopted counseling and guidance practices, though to varying extents. All the pupils interviewed indicated that they were aware of the services. Majority of the schools (75%) offered the service once a week while the rest offered it at least twice a month.

4.4 Impact of Counseling and Guidance on pupils of primary schools in Makadara Division

In order to meet the second objective of the study “To determine impact of guidance and counseling services on pupils of primary schools in Makadara division of Nairobi Province”, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with listed statements regarding impact of counseling and guidance on school children. The responses are summarized and presented in absolute numbers in table 4.5 below. Key: (Strongly disagree; Disagree; Somehow agree; Agree; Strongly agree)

Table 4.5: Impact of Counseling and Guidance on primary school pupils (absolute numbers)

Impact of Counseling and Guidance on primary school pupils	Responses						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean score	Standard deviation
<i>Impact of counseling and guidance on academic performance</i>							
Preventive counseling, occurring before students are in crisis, reduces the risk of these students dropping out later	-	1	4	11	5	2.162	4.324
Counseling services support teachers in the classroom and enable teachers to provide quality instruction designed to assist students in achieving high standards	1	2	3	7	8	1.557	3.114
Students in schools that provide counseling services, their classes are less likely to be interrupted by other students, and that their peers behaved better in school	-	1	4	9	7	1.917	3.834
schools with more fully implemented model guidance programs have students who are more likely to earn higher grades	2	1	5	6	7	1.294	2.588
<i>Impact of counseling and guidance on personal/social life</i>							
School counselors' impact students' academic performance and can increase the on-task, productive behavior of students and reduce disruptive behaviors.	2	2	3	9	5	1.475	2.950
Help students resolve emotional problems	1	-	4	10	6	2.013	4.026
Help students resolve social and behavioral problems	-	-	4	6	11	2.302	4.604
Help students develop clearer focus or sense of direction	1	2	4	10	4	1.747	3.493
School counselors help connect the family as a whole to the educational process	0	2	10	5	4	1.884	3.768
Students who participated in a school counseling program had significantly less inappropriate behaviors and more positive attitudes toward school than those students who did not participate in the program.	1	-	4	7	9	1.917	3.834
Group counseling provided by school counselors significantly decreased participants' aggressive and hostile behaviors	1	1	8	7	4	1.636	3.271
School counselors have proven effective in preventing students from committing suicide.	1	2	6	7	4	1.275	2.550
<i>Impact of counseling and guidance career development</i>							
School counselors influenced their students' future plans by encouraging them to have high expectations.	2	2	3	6	8	1.342	2.683
N=21							

The responses are also summarized and presented in terms of standard deviations and mean scores as shown in table 4.6 below.

Duties and responsibilities of respondents: The respondents were asked to list their duties and responsibilities. The responses are summarized and presented as follows:-

Head Teachers: Providing leadership to the school; Teaching; Counseling and guidance

Deputy Head Teachers: Principal assistant to the Head teacher; Counseling and guidance; in charge of discipline; and teaching

Teachers: Teaching and Counseling and guidance

The findings indicate that all the respondents in the study and had a good grasp of their duties and responsibilities and would thus be able to give objective answers. The findings also indicated that each category of the teachers had a good grasp of their respective duties and responsibilities and hence gave objective answers to the study questions.

Reasons for starting counseling and guidance services in schools: During personal interviews, the respondents were asked to give reasons for starting counseling and guidance services in their respective schools. All the respondents were unanimous that many challenges faced the pupils leading to increasing drop out rates. The various schools thus suggested to the Ministry of education that the way forward was to start the programmes in schools. The Ministry's response was to come up with a curricular, which they are currently implementing.

Notable changes observed amongst the pupils: The respondents were asked to indicate some of the notable

changes observed as a result of implementing counseling and guidance programmes in their schools. Though the responses varied, they are summarized and presented as: - (i) Improved discipline amongst the pupils; (ii) Reduced drop out rates; (iii) Improved academic performance; and (iv) Improved teacher – pupils’ relationship.

Challenges encountered in providing counseling and guidance services: The teachers were asked to indicate some of the challenges faced in bid to provide counseling and guidance services to pupils in their respective schools. The most notable challenges included little or no support from parents and guardians; Little or lack of support from the ministry through capacity building of the teachers; frequent transfers of counseling and guidance teachers, which often disrupted programmes; and resistance from some pupils with deviant behavior. The coping mechanisms were listed as being: - Holding sensitization sessions with stakeholders, who include parents and guardians with a view to making them understand the importance of guidance and counseling in schools; the respective schools supporting the training teachers interested in counseling and guidance; and monitoring behavior changes amongst the pupils so as to pay more attention to those who prove to be difficult.

Suggestions on the way forward: When asked to suggest measures that could be taken by the various stakeholders in order to enhance effectiveness of the programmes, the teachers were of the view that the most importance thing is to involve all stakeholders in the process. They include the ministries of education and Gender & Youth Affairs; the teachers; the pupils; and the parents/guardians in the programmes.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Numerous research studies show that professional school counselors, implementing a comprehensive school counseling program, can serve a vital role in maximizing student achievement. A 2003 research study of Florida pupils in the 5th through 9th grades found that pupils in schools with a comprehensive guidance program scored significantly better on the state’s standardized test for reading and math.

Another 2003 study of elementary-age pupils in Washington State found that pupils who had spent several years in schools with strong, comprehensive counseling programs did better on standardized achievement tests. The study findings indicated that high-quality counseling can prevent pupils from turning to violence, drug, or alcohol abuse, as well as improve grades and reduce classroom disruptions.

Based on the study findings, the following conclusions are drawn:-

Benefits of an Effective School Counseling and Guidance Program may be summarized and presented as follows:

Benefits to pupils: guarantees services to all pupils; focuses on pupils’ needs; develops proactive skills for all pupils; provides age-appropriate levels of interaction and instruction; and helps pupils become more resourceful in decision making

Benefits to parents: encourages involvement of parents in pupils’; learning environment; provides parents timely, appropriate support and resources when needed; increases opportunities for parent, student and counselor interaction; and brings about better understanding of the guidance and counseling program

Teachers: promotes a team effort to address school counseling competencies; increases teacher accessibility to counselor as a multiple resource; integrates curricula and associated competencies; and integrates interdisciplinary approach with all curricular areas

Administrators: creates a structured program with specific school; counseling competencies; provides accountability to school counseling program; facilitates team approach between administration and school counseling program; encourages better understanding of the role of counselors and the total guidance program

Ministry of Education: provides a rationale for school counseling as a comprehensive program in the school system; serves as a source of data regarding competencies in school counseling; creates greater school-community interaction; and promotes better understanding of the role of the guidance program and of counselors

Business, Industry and Labor: increased opportunity for collaboration among counselors, pupils, and business/industry/labor; provides a potential workforce with necessary career, human relations and decision-making skills; enhances the role of the counselor as resource; and promotes collaboration in preparing pupils for the world of work.

Counseling Staff:- provides a clearly defined set of functions; integrates the school counseling program with other school curricula and programs; and articulates competencies pupils are expected to achieve as a result of participating in a comprehensive, developmental school counseling program

5.3 Recommendations of the study

5.3.1 Recommendations for policy and practice

The primary function of primary school counselors should be work directly with the pupils. The Ministry of Education should encourage the development and implementation of local school counseling programs, involving the family (especially parents), the school (pupils and teachers), and the community. The primary areas of school counseling activities, programs and services should include but not be limited to the following: -

educational development; career planning and exploration; self knowledge and the skills to interact positively with others

The goals of school counseling programs should be clearly spelt out as follows: (i) To help all pupils understand the importance of effective career decision making and planning; (ii) To assist all pupils in developing an on-going educational plan; and (iii) To improve student achievement at all levels by integrating school counseling information into other relevant curricular areas

The School counseling programs should include but not be limited to the following: (i) Age - appropriate curriculum, matching activities to the needs of elementary, middle, and high school pupils and their families; (ii) Individual planning with pupils and parents, supporting them with academic and career information; and (iii) Responsive services for crisis situations, assisting pupils and families, and teachers and/or referring them for further help, if necessary; and Support for teachers, administrators, parents and community with regard to school counseling issues by providing consultation, information, and/or referral.

5.3.2 Recommended areas of further research

The findings of this study, it is hoped, will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and form basis for future researchers. The following areas of further researcher are thus suggested: - (i) Whereas the current study focused on responses from the management of the primary schools, future studies should focus on responses from the pupils and their parents; and (ii) Future studies should seek to establish the nature, extent and adoption profile of usage of counseling and guidance services at all levels of education in Kenya.

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APPENDIX I: PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MAKADARA DIVISION OF NAIROBI PROVINCE

No.	NAME OF SCHOOL	ZONE
1	BARAKA	BURUBURU
2	BIDII	BURUBURU
3	HARAMBEE	BURUBURU
4	OLM NAIROBI SOUTH	VIWANDA
5	PLAINS VIEW	VIWANDA
6	NAIROBI SOUTH	VIWANDA
7	RABAI ROAD	BURUBURU
8	ST. MICHALS	BURUBURU
9	ST. PATRICKS	BURUBURU
10	ST. ANNES	BURUBURU
11	KALOLENI	VIWANDA
12	DR. KRAPP	BURUBURU
13	OFAFA JERICHO	BURUBURU
14	ST. PAULS	BURUBURU
15	CANNON APOLO	BURUBURU
16	MARIAKANI	VIWANDA
17	MUKURU	VIWANDA
18	ST.CATHERINES	VIWANDA
19	MARTIN LUTHER	BURUBURU
20	ST. JOHNS	VIWANDA
21	MAKONGENI	VIWANDA
22	JOGOO ROAD	BURUBURU
23	BAKHITA	VIWANDA
24	ST. ELIZABETH L.L.	VIWANDA
25	JOSEPH APUNDO	VIWANDA

Source: Education Department, Nairobi City Council, April, 2008

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire has been designed to collect information from Counseling and Guidance teachers or Head teachers of primary school in Makadara division of Nairobi province and is meant for academic purposes only. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. Section I. seeks to capture the profile of respondents while section II will capture issues pertaining to the area of study. Please complete each section as instructed. Do not write your name or any other form of identification on the questionnaire. All the information in this questionnaire will be treated in confidence.

SECTION I: PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

1. Name of school _____
2. Number of pupils _____
3. Your position in the school _____
4. Indicate your gender? (Please tick as appropriate)
 - (a) Male
 - (b) Female
5. Indicate your age group (Please tick as appropriate)
 - (a) 18 – 27 years
 - (b) 28 - 37 years
 - (c) 38 - 45 years
 - (d.) 46 – 55 years
 - (e). 55 years and above
6. Indicate whether you are trained in Counseling and Guidance (Please tick as appropriate)

Yes
No
7. For how long have you worked as counseling and guidance teacher? (Please tick as appropriate)
 - (a) Less than 2 years
 - (b) 2 to 4 years

- (c) 4 to 6 years
(d) 6 years and above
8. How long have you worked in your school? (Please tick as appropriate)
(a) 0 to 2 years
(b) 2 to 4 years
(c) 4 to 6 years
(d) 6 years and above
9. Please list your duties and responsibilities

SECTION II: IMPACT OF COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE ON PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

10. Please indicate to which extent your school offers counseling and guidance services to pupils using a scale of 1-5 below, in which;

5- To a very large extent.

4- To a large extent.

3- To some Extent.

2- To a small extent.

1- To no extent.

11. Listed below are statements regarding impact of counseling and guidance on primary school pupils. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the statements in relation to your school (Tick as appropriate)

Where: Strongly disagree = (1); Disagree = (2); Somehow agree = (3); Agree = (4); Strongly agree = (5)

Impact of Counseling and Guidance on primary school pupils	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Impact of counseling and guidance on academic performance</i>					
Preventive counseling, occurring before students are in crisis, reduces the risk of these students dropping out later					
Counseling services support teachers in the classroom and enable teachers to provide quality instruction designed to assist students in achieving high standards					
Students in schools that provide counseling services, their classes are less likely to be interrupted by other students, and that their peers behaved better in school					
schools with more fully implemented model guidance programs have students who are more likely to earn higher grades					
<i>Impact of counseling and guidance on personal/social life</i>					
School counselors' impact students' academic performance and can increase the on-task, productive behavior of students and reduce disruptive behaviors.					
Help students resolve emotional problems					
Help students resolve social and behavioral problems					
Help students develop clearer focus or sense of direction					
School counselors help connect the family as a whole to the educational process					
Students who participated in a school counseling program had significantly less inappropriate behaviors and more positive attitudes toward school than those students who did not participate in the program.					
Group counseling provided by school counselors significantly decreased participants' aggressive and hostile behaviors					
School counselors have proven effective in preventing students from committing suicide.					
<i>Impact of counseling and guidance career development</i>					
School counselors influenced their students' future plans by encouraging them to have high expectations.					

THANK YOU

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (TEACHERS)

For how long have you been providing counseling and guidance services to pupils in this school?

What are some of the reasons that made you start providing counseling and guidance services to pupils in the school?

What are some of the notable changes that you have observed amongst the pupils in this school since implementation of counseling and guidance began?

What are some of the challenges you have encountered while providing counseling and guidance services to the pupils in this school?

How have you been coping with the challenges?

What do you think can be done by the various stakeholders in order to enhance effectiveness of counseling and guidance services in the school?

Should you have any other issues please be free to share with me.

Thank you.

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